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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/701,076	11/05/2003	Barbara Jane Wight	051481-5119	6307

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EXAMINER	
PARRIES, DRU M	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2836	

DATE MAILED: 11/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/701,076	WIGHT, BARBARA JANE	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Dru M. Parries	2836	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *09 August 2006*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-19* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-19* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed August 9, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Regarding the argument that Wallace doesn't teach increasing the closed path by sequential connection, when the controller (38 and 12A) has switch (54A) closed, and then device (12B) is connected to the controller, the closed path is increased instantly. Then after the controller programs device (12B), the switch (54B) is closed, and then if/when device (12C) is connected it would increase the closed path again, instantaneously. Therefore, the closed path is created/increased, simultaneously, when the next device in the sequential order is connected. Also, "a device (say 12B) must first be connected to the controller and programmed before..." the next device (say 12C) can be plugged in to increase the closed path, instantaneously.

Regarding the electrical couplings having electrical contacts, this limitation was presented previously (and still is) in claim 7, and Starr teaches couplings having electrical contacts.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-7, 11-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallace et al. (5,964,815) and Starr (4,468,612). Wallace teaches a control system comprising a controller (38), a wiring harness (44), and a plurality of devices (12N) connected in series via the

wiring harness to the controller. Wallace also teaches sequential electrical connection of the devices to the harness to increase the closed path of detected and identified devices (via programming and the normally open switches/ports). He also teaches that non-sequential connection opens the closed path and those devices can't be detected nor identified, and the devices are substantially identical (sensors, occupant restraint devices). Wallace goes on to teach the controller identifying the plurality of devices based on their proximity to the controller (identifies the first device first; the second device second, etc.) and incrementally expands the closed path to include the controller and however many devices have been identified. Wallace also teaches that feedback from the controller is used to recognize the plurality of devices (Col. 5, lines 50-53; Abstract; Col. 6, lines 28-37). Wallace fails to teach the wiring harness having a plurality of first and second couplings that attach each device to the harness. Starr teaches a wiring harness (171-174) with first (121-124) and second connectors (top of 111-114) that attach/detach devices to the harness. The second connectors are attached directly to electrical components. Starr also teaches the connectors being substantially identical and having at least three electrical contacts arranged in a common pattern (101-107 & 131-137). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate first and second connectors between the wiring harness and the devices so that the devices can be removed and rearranged in the series system, if necessary, thereby giving the user more freedom in constructing the system.

4. Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wallace et al. (5,964,815), Starr (4,468,612), Keen et al. (6,988,670), and Farag et al. (2004/0014418). Wallace and Starr teach the control system described above. Wallace fails to teach the system

being used for an HVAC system in a vehicle. Keen teaches a control system for an HVAC system in a vehicle. He teaches the HVAC system controlling the airflow and temperature in a vehicle via substantially identical actuators (Abstract). Keen is silent on where the airflow is being directed. Farag teaches an HVAC system in a vehicle that directs airflow to the footwell, interior vents, and windshield defroster ([0005]). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Wallace's control system into an HVAC system for a vehicle so the different HVAC modules can be replaced and repaired easily and it's an efficient control system that would make any system work better (i.e. an HVAC system).

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dru M. Parries whose telephone number is (571) 272-8542. The

examiner can normally be reached on M-Th from 9:00am to 6:00pm. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Sircus, can be reached on 571-272-2800 x36. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DMP

10-17-2006

BRIAN SIRCUS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER